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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the development campaign of the School of Social Work at the University of Washington, which has focused on funding proposals related to the older worker. The underlying approach of a development campaign, steps in researching the private sector, and basic points in writing proposals for foundations and corporations are described. Illustrations from proposals developed by the School of Social Work related to the older worker, including preretirement planning, health promotion, alcoholism, elderly abuse, and families providing care to elderly relatives, are used throughout the paper. In addition, the materials also deal with ethical considerations and the issue of future funding. (JAC)

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CHALLENGING CORPORATIONS TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF OLDER WORKERS

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In these times of federal cutbacks, more aging agencies, gerontological programs, and educational institutions such as schools of social work are turning to the private sector for funding. Clearly, corporations and foundations cannot fill the gaps created by the cutbacks. Corporations have not had a history of reaching their maximum allowable contributions and may be even less likely to do so in a recessionary period. In addition, corporations have tended to give to groups other than health and social service agencies. The painful reality for the many groups now hoping for private funding is that any increase in corporate philanthropy will depend directly on the the health of the economy. Accordingly, aging has not been a field widely funded by private sources, perhaps in part because aging concerns have not necessarily appeared to be related to corporate interests.

Nevertheless, despite this gloomy resource picture, it is essential that practitioners and educators in the aging field develop their ability to tap into private funding sources. This paper describes the development campaign of the School of Social Work at the University of Washington. A major focus of this development effort has been to fund proposals related to the older worker. From our experience in developing proposals and in approaching the private sector, the authors have formulated some guidelines for attempting to obtain private funds. Since these guidelines reflect the experience of an educational unit, new to the private fundraising sphere, some of the implications will differ for a service agencies that already have boards and ongoing fundraising efforts. These guidelines are intended not as a cookbook approach, but rather to be adapted to a variety of organizations seeking private funding. Drawing upon the components of the School's campaign related to aging, this paper describes the underlying approach of a development campaign, steps in researching the private sector, and basic

points in writing proposals for foundations and corporations. Illustrations from proposals developed by the School of Social Work related to the older worker--preretirement planning, health promotion, alcoholism, elderly abuse, and families providing care to elderly relatives--are utilized throughout the paper.

What is a Development Campaign?

The School of Social Work's development campaign represents an ongoing long-term effort to generate private support in a variety of ways, as contrasted with short-term ad hoc fundraising projects. A campaign has set monetary goals, a determined duration, and a well-defined purpose. It consists of a variety of planned programs directed towards separate, identifiable constituents. Those programs include: grantwriting, directed toward corporations and foundations; direct mail, phone solicitations and personal contact, directed toward annual gifts from alumni, clients, volunteers, employees, and board members; and planned giving, directed toward individuals capable of giving major gifts through specific plans to aid in estate and tax planning.

The most successful campaigns or ongoing development efforts involve organizations where the focus on generating private support is a priority for all individuals in the organization and the need for private support is urgent and well documented. There are several key steps in initiating and sustaining a successful development effort. In this paper, however, the authors will focus on four components needed to generate private grants from corporate and foundation sources. These are: 1) the cause or case for support, 2) using volunteer leadership, 3) researching corporate and foundation resources, and 4) steps in proposal writing.

Key Components of a Development Campaign. The cause or "case" represents a compelling reason for support of your organization and provides a clear image of who and what your organization is. It should be brief, concise, and include information on: the organization's mission and goals, directions for the future, the overall need for private support, and a description of program needs.

The case is broader than any one grant proposal and can be developed into a theme to position your organization's image in the reader's mind. Examples of themes include, "The UW, you're getting something out of it whether you go there or not," where the supporting materials used showed the University as a regional resource in research and public service and not just a place to train students. The School of Social Work developed the theme, "Partners in Community Service" to emphasize the School as a resource to work with the community. The School's written development materials utilize this theme, "Partners in Community Service," by emphasizing collaborative efforts between the private sector and the School of Social Work as a means to improve existing services and prevent social and human problems. Within this broader theme of "Partners in Community Service," the older worker was developed as a focus for all aging proposals. Within this focus, the following points are emphasized: the rapid increase in the number of elderly, the ways in which problems of the elderly can impact upon both the older employee and his/her family, and the potential benefits for the corporation of responding to such problems of the older worker. In developing these themes, the School of Social Work first reviewed its faculty strengths and potential in order to identify what can the School realistically offer in any collaborative effort with the private sector. Therefore, before formulating a case or theme for fundraising efforts, a review of your organization's capabilities

is first necessary. What are your organization's goals? What do you do well? And why do you need private funding in order to do it?

Utilizing Volunteers. Volunteers are an essential aspect of your organization's ability to solicit corporations and foundations. They can provide your organization with input on how it is perceived by the community and can serve as spokespersons or endorsers in the community.

If your organization is well established, a board and a strong volunteer component probably already exist. Many educational institutions, however, lack a volunteer board or committee. The School of Social Work has had a Visiting Committee composed of community representatives for several years. From the Visiting Committee, a separate Development Committee and a Steering Committee for the campaign were formed. Whether a separate committee or a subset of an existing board, a volunteer committee to help with fundraising should include representatives from your client population, policymakers in your service area, professional representatives, and individuals from the business community with fundraising experience. In addition to being involved in broad-based program planning and evaluation, volunteers can help identify potential funding sources, conduct research on sources, assist in the development and/or review of proposals, set up meetings with corporate or foundation representatives and write endorsing letters for your projects.

If your organization does not have an existing volunteer group, the following steps are appropriate: Write a simple, brief job description for committee members. Include the amount of time it will take, the group's overall goal, and what specifically members will be asked to do. Then identify and meet with a key person to lead the effort. This person, who will play an extremely critical role throughout the campaign, could be an existing board member, a strong and visible friend of your organization, or

someone well known in your service area, but not yet involved in your organization. In the School of Social Work's campaign, a Vice-President of a large insurance company, who has been involved and interested in the School for years, chairs the campaign; he has played an essential role in involving other corporate representatives in the development process.

Volunteers should not be recruited merely to use their name on your letterhead. This is not only resented by volunteers, but can reflect poorly on the organization. One contributions officer from a large corporation, for example, was reviewing a proposal and noticed the name of someone she knew. When she called to ask some questions, the woman knew very little about the organization or the proposal! The second lesson here is to keep volunteers informed and involved in your organization's activities. For this reason, starting out with a smaller, more informal group may be more effective than forming a large official board which requires a greater amount of staff time to support.

Researching Funding Sources. Once specific needs are determined, a development committee is active, and a case or theme for the campaign is developed, the next step is to identify the corporations and foundations most likely to support your program.

There are basically four types of foundations, each differing in legal form, mode of operation, and origin of funding.

Independent Foundations. Their primary function is making grants; their assets are derived from the gift of an individual or family. Some use the term fund, trust, corporation or endowment. Typically, they have broad charters but limit their giving to a few fields of interest (i.e., the Lois and Samuel Silberman Fund).

Company Sponsored Foundations. Deriving their funds from a profit-making company, they are independently constituted and their purpose is to make grants, usually on a broad basis. In contrast to corporate-giving programs which are administered within the corporation, they are sometimes administered externally to the company. This type of foundation allows the company to set aside funds for use in future years regardless of company earnings (i.e., The Ford Foundation).

Community Foundations. Their funds are derived from many donors rather than only one. Their investments are often managed by trustee banks; their grants generally go to the local region. They define themselves as general charitable purposes with freedom to designate areas of giving (i.e., The Seattle Foundation).

Operating Foundations. Their purpose is to conduct research or other programs as determined by their charter. They make some small grants, but generally their funds are used to support the foundation's programs (i.e., The Arthritis Foundation)

Researching foundation sources involves two steps: 1) finding the information, and 2) analyzing the information.

Directories to foundations are numerous and costly. Other options, include:

1. Joining the Foundation Center Associates

($250 per year plus the expense of buying data sheets). Memberships provides access to the Center's extensive records. Members can call for information on gift listings, officers, etc., or order articles or copies of foundations' 990-AR forms (filed with the IRS, reporting disbursements, income, names of managers, etc.).

2. Using the Foundation Centers Regional Collections in 60 cities

Regional collections, in public libraries, university libraries, or foundation libraries, contain annual reports from local foundations and are generally staffed. Collections contain:

The Foundation Directory

The Foundation Grants Index

Com search printouts

Foundation grants to Individuals

Foundation News magazine

Booklets and brochures published by the Center

3. Writing the foundation for an annual report.

Analyzing the following information is useful in assessing the likelihood of funding by the foundation:

-The list of foundation managers and/or trustees as potential volunteers, friends, and contacts.

-The list of grants to assess whether they have supported similar projects; the purposes of funded projects, for example, may suggest the foundations' priorities. On the other hand, a foundation may not have a written policy or stated purpose to serve the elderly nor a record of funding aging programs. Nevertheless, their stated purpose, such as health care, alcoholism, or labor conditions can perhaps be specifically related to the elderly's needs. In such situations, it may be more effective to emphasize subject matter and program areas, not aging per se, in order to minimize competition for the few "aging" dollars.

-The geographic location of recipients.

-The average size of the grants, to determine if your proposal is within their capability.

Corporate Giving

One in four corporations are estimated to have charitable contribution programs; this figure is expected to increase to one in two by 1990. The tax reform measure, passed by the 1981 Congress, increased the allowable deduction available to corporations for grants to nonprofit organizations from 5-10% of pre-tax profits. Although most corporations give far less than the 5% limit, this legislation does reflect a new emphasis on developing private sector support for charitable activities.

Researching corporate giving can be more difficult than researching foundation gifts. Unless the company has a foundation, it is not required to make information about its grants public. Directories of corporate giving contain only limited information on specific grants, but can provide contact information and general program descriptions.

Corporate giving will, in general, continue to be concentrated in places where firms have their operations. After identifying local corporations, it is useful to investigate the contributions programs of those companies that have some type of connections with your organization. Public companies are required to issue an annual report, which will describe the company's activities and provide information on the officers, directors, and possibly their contributions program. (Annual reports can be obtained by writing to the company or checking in the business section of a large library.)

Other sources of information include:

-Directors and Executives

-Dun & Bradstreet Reference Book of Corporate Managements

-Readers Guide to Periodic Literature - for references to national corporations

-Index-Wall Street Journal - articles on specific companies and industry trends

-Directory of Corporate Philanthropy ($177) - published by the Public Management Institute. Brief descriptive information on corporate giving of the Forbes 500 list, indexed by program area, type of support, geographic limitations.

-Manufacturers Register or Chamber of Commerce Directory - local information

Another extremely valuable source of information on corporations is the members of the business community who serve on your development committee.

In researching corporations, it is important to look for a company where there is a connection between the project focus and their overall goals. For example, in exploring funding for a training project for families to solve the problems of their elderly parents, we pursued funding through a corporation where the majority of employees were women--the population most likely to be providing care to an aged family member and therefore to experience absenteeism and other work-related difficulties due to care-giving responsibilities. The problem area was thus related to characteristics of the corporation's employees. A project on health promotion could be related to the nature of the work, for example, by pursuing funding through an insurance company which has a direct concern with people's health.

Approaching Corporations and Foundations

Most of us who have had experience with completing applications for federal funds will discover the need to modify our approach. In general, business will be less venturesome than government in selecting donees. Private funders are receiving an increasing number of requests. In fact, William A. Orme, Secretary of the General Electric Foundation, reported a 50% jump in requests, or an average of one every 26 minutes (Schardt, 1981). With such demands, everyone is pointing a finger at corporations to do more. Clearly, you should not appeal to their guilt or approach corporations with the assumption that they should fund your project just because they have profits.

In contrast to responding to a federal RFP where recognition of a problem already exists, your organization may have to convince the funder that older people face numerous problems and that it is in the funder's self-interest to do something about these problems. Private foundations generally have more latitude in the kinds of things they can or cannot support, since their only constituency is their board of trustees, which generally has a policy reflecting the wishes of whoever established the foundation (Griffin, 1980). A corporate giving program, however, is constrained by constituencies of shareholders, consumers, employees, and the general public, who all feel that they have a stake in the dollars dispersed. Since these varied constituencies are likely to scrutinize closely where the corporation gives, the corporation needs to perceive a direct benefit for themselves in return for funding your ideas. Such benefits may be difficult to see in the case of aging programs, since the primary constituencies will tend to be younger populations. Corporations do, however, have the flexibility to provide other services in addition to granting dollar amounts.

These include: in-kind services, donated space for meetings, printing services and volunteer time.

A corporation or foundation is interested in making something happen if they fund you. Accordingly, they are more inlined to fund visible, short-term demonstration projects, not extensive research and development. You are offering an opportunity and need to implement an idea which you both believe is worthwhile. In developing the idea, clearly elaborate on what the idea/concept is, how much you need, by when and what for.

There may be several underlying reasons why a corporation might be interested in your idea. Most corporations are aware that the demographics of the situation--the increasing number of older workers, and retirees--have implications for their company, their stockholders, and the community. Additional reasons for funding your proposals include:

-The project would result in a direct benefit to the company; for example, in proposing preretirement programs, we could point to the value of improved morale of workers within 5-10 years of retirement. The family caregiver proposal emphasized that absenteeism from work, brought on by aging family responsibilities, could be reduced through an educational program. Corporations are interested in minimizing citizens' reliance on formal social and health services, especially if this can have the long-range impact of lowered corporate taxes; worksite health promotion projects can be attractive in this regard.

-The program is a preventive one and funds invested now can save costs in the future. For example, funds to train families to more effectively care for their aging parents may prevent future problems, such as heavy reliance on social services, inappropriate institutionalization, or abuse. Health promotion projects can increase the number of days of effective functioning.

-The project or program will reflect positively on the corporation in the community. Consider where the corporation needs to have a good image and with whom? For example, what is the political value to the corporation of funding aging projects?

-The project has such a strong emotional appeal that no one can argue with it. For example, a proposal to prevent domestic abuse and neglect of the elderly

The stage of developing your idea is a long one and involves working closely with your volunteer committee to get their input regarding the feasibility of your idea. The proposals developed by these authors took over a year to develop and involved a process of several times presenting the ideas to the development committee, receiving their feedback, and modifying the proposals. It was only after numerous drafts that the proposals were ready to present formally to a corporation or foundation.

Writing the Proposal

In contrast to federal grants which have detailed application procedures, the guidelines for length and format of proposals to foundations and corporations tend to be much less clear. In some cases, written guidelines may not exist or may suggest only a two to three page letter, an abstract, or prior submission of a concept paper.

Two basic rules to follow in writing the proposal are:

1. Keep it short. Do not tell them more than they need to know. The proposal should be structured so that it is easy to read, with subheads, underlinings, and indentations. In some cases, points can be outlined for purposes of highlighting and summarizing them.

2. Avoid jargon. Whatever your profession, it is easy to fall into your own jargonese. Our proposal to help families solve the problems of their aging parents was modified to eliminate the word "family caregiver" (which was used 27 times in the proposal) after we received feedback from some of our committee members that no one knew what that meant! It is helpful to have someone from outside the aging field, but who is knowledgeable and as close to the characteristics of the funding source as possible, review your proposals.

Every proposal, whether it is a complete proposal or a summary letter, should include the following components: Introduction, problem definition, objectives, methods, evaluation, future funding, and budget.

Introduction

The introduction should include a brief but thorough paragraph on who you (as an agency or organization) are and what are you in business to do (your mission). Also include information which can help build credibility, if the reader is not familiar with your organization (i.e., national rankings, awardes received, etc.).

Problem Definition

In contrast to federal grant applications where there is joint recognition that a problem exists and they are looking for the applicant best qualified to solve it, private funders may not believe that the older worker faces problems different from any other grouping nor that it is in their best interests to do something about such needs. For example, because personnel

officers and supervisors have not heard numerous complaints about the difficulties of providing care to aging relatives, some of the companies approached about the aging family proposal have not viewed this as a problem. Empirical documentation of the problem was not sufficient. The problem became personalized, however, when we met with a Human Resource manager who was dealing with her own elderly parents. Because of her personal experience, she recognized the need for a program such as ours and was able to mobilize support for it within the corporation.

Private funders are less likely to be interested in an extensive literature review and list of references than in types of documentation that relate the problem to their local community. Such documentation could include a small survey of other local companies; letters of documentation from community groups, peers from other corporations and the community; and a sampling of the types of calls received by service agencies, such as a crisis clinic. In Seattle, for example, a local project, based on the types of calls currently received by the Crisis Clinic, has received priority funding from three corporations. A focused interview among human resource representatives from local major corporations is a useful way to document the incidence of problems. The Chairperson of the School's Development Committee invited representatives from the human resources divisions of several major corporations to attend a meeting where faculty presented their ideas for funding; the corporate representatives could then provide their reactions to the faculty's ideas and their priorities regarding employee assistance needs. Such a meeting should be conducted after your organization has begun to develop ideas, but before proceeding too far without corporate and community input.

When proposing projects to benefit older workers, staff and trustees may have difficulty relating personally to aging issues. Institutionalized ageism can hinder recognition of the problems. In such cases, efforts to personalize the issues and to relate them to the themes of cost effectiveness and self-sufficiency can be useful in reaching joint agreement about the nature of the problem.

Objectives

As in any proposal, the objectives should be specific, measurable outcomes of your program. A common mistake in proposal writing is to fail to show how the proposed solution impacts on the problem, in other words, to tie the objectives to the problem statement. In our proposals, we have differentiated short-term, measurable objectives that can be attained in the funding period and long-range outcomes that could be measured in a 2 to a 5-year period if the funding source chose to do such follow up. In addition, tangible products have been identified that can be used after the funding has ended; examples include cassette tapes, packaged self-instructional learning materials, and audiovisuals.

Methods

Most of our proposals have based activities at the worksite. In such cases, the advantages of worksite-based activities, such as geographic and psychological accessibility to the participants, should be emphasized. The methods section should clearly spell out who is going to do what when. An outline format that is very readable and a GANT charat are useful here.

Evaluation

While corporations are concerned about being able to measure the program's impact, they are not likely to fund an evaluation design that involves measurements at various points over time or control groups. A common trap to grant writers is to propose measuring results that are not measurable. Obviously, the evaluation design has to be closely tied to the problem statement and the objectives.

Future Funding

Private funders are often interested in initiating an idea, but not sustaining it over time. To continue the project, explore the idea of packaging and marketing the materials or training existing personnel to incorporate materials in their employee benefits (e.g., training of trainers). For example, in the family caregiving proposal, human resource managers could be trained to present materials about aging and community resources to employees on a regular basis. Accordingly, it is useful to separate out implementation costs per participant from development and evaluation costs since corporations want to know what it will cost to offer such a program as an ongoing employee benefit. In our budgets up columns for research and development costs have been separated from from implementation costs.

Ethical Considerations

Thus far, this paper has dealt primarily with the pragmatic questions of how to build a campaign and fund proposals. Throughout this process, however, it is important to recognize and deal with some ethical questions.

As human service professionals, most of us are committed to a client-oriented and service-focused set of values, not profit-centered. The reality is that some corporations are involved in policies and practices that are at fundamental odds with client-centered values. A basic decision that each of us must make is do we wish to participate in organizations that are promoting values that are unacceptable to us? More specifically, do we seek funds for aging projects from organizations that discriminate against older people, that perpetuate ageism in their advertising, or that have practices which impact negatively on older people. For example, do we try to capitalize on the political value of the telephone company's need to appear responsive to elderly consumers or do we take a stand on how rate increases disproportionately affect people on fixed incomes?

If a work site proposal is implemented, we are faced with determining whether our responsiblity to the older worker is reconcilable with the organization's profit motive. Clearly, the organization benefits from a happier, healthier workforce. But what if in the process of implementing our project, we discover organizational practices that create additional problems for the workers? To what extent can we or should we deal with these other organizational practices, especially when we are funded by the perpetrators of the poor organizational practices? These are complicated judgments, without easy answers, and made more complicated by the tremendous variation among corporations in terms of their policies and practices. Our point here is merely to raise these issues for consideration and suggest that each of us, in pursuing corporate funding, need to clarify what we believe and what we want to protect.

Conclusion

This paper has described the process used by one educational unit; clearly, there are not set guidelines or easy answers. Hopefully, this paper has pointed out major issues to consider in implementing a development campaign and writing proposals for corporate and foundation funding.

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